

Report of the 2nd Meeting of the Livestock and Fish CGIAR Research Program Science and Partnership Advisory Committee, 20-23 May 2013, ILRI Addis Ababa

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CGIAR is a global partnership that unites organizations engaged in research for a food secure future. The CGIAR Research Program on Livestock and Fish aims to increase the productivity of small-scale livestock and fish systems in sustainable ways, making meat, milk and fish more available and affordable across the developing world. The Program brings together four CGIAR Centers: the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) with a mandate on livestock; the WorldFish Center with a mandate on aquaculture; the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), which works on forages; and the International Center for Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), which works on small ruminants.

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Overview: The Program Review and Planning meeting was held for 2.5 days and approximately 100 people attending representing all levels of the Livestock and Fish CGIAR Research Program. The general format of the meeting was excellent in that it was very inclusive and allowed for people to discuss issues and share both their successes and concerns. Meeting organizers are to be commended for these aspects of the planning and the hospitality at the site. Given that the meeting was largely to inform and discuss among the participants, a number of issues were raised which should be highlighted.

Issues raised and concerns to be considered: The following issues were brought forth both privately and publically.

- 1) This meeting was needed and was considered by some to be overdue.
- 2) It would have been helpful for a list of participants (including their roles in the CRP) to have been available at the onset so that everyone knew in advance who would be attending. Pat and Evelyn are working on a program 'who's who' reference list.
- 3) It would have been helpful for agendas to be available for both the general meeting and the SPAC meeting to enable the delegates and SPAC members to put it all into context and understand the objectives better. The general meeting agendas were posted on noticeboards and were circulated in advance and were online. In Addis, we try to avoid mass printing as there are no operational paper recycling processes.
- 4) There were signs that the interactions between the themes and the value chains were not clear to all participants and hence some value chain people felt that the research plans / activities are not relevant to the value chains and some researchers do not see where their activities will fit in.
- 5) Transparency at the program's budgeting level seem to be lacking.
- 6) Responsibility for budgets may not exist at the proper level to optimize progress and assure positive outcomes. Value chain coordinators need to have more financial access to make the necessary outcomes possible.
- 7) Researchers may not have aligned themselves fully with the respective value chains. This may result from the different "culture" of the researchers and their perception of the lack of academic reward they may receive for working with the value chain actors. For example in animal health, there may be a mis-match between the immediate animal health needs of the value chains and the focus and capabilities of the researchers. It is likely that a dairy value chain in Tanzania will require very focused and specific animal health input and advice on the ground, which may not be within the scope of the researchers' skillsets or interests. We understand from the first meeting that other partners in herd health were under consideration for these activities e.g Teagasc, Wageningen, but there was no further update on these aspects. The five diseases being researched at ILRI are vitally important as transboundary constraints to livestock productivity but are not necessarily directly relevant to the everyday problems of the production diseases likely to be faced by poor livestock farmers e.g. endoparasites, respiratory and enteric disease, mastitis etc.
- 8) IDOs were discussed at the meeting. While there was general agreement from the participants that they were appropriate in principle, there were several concerns mentioned. These included their complexity, and the need for them to be translated into measurable

indicators in a harmonized manner. Equally IDOs are needed for each individual value chain such that it is clear what can and should be achieved.

9) The partnerships are clearly an evolving process but they need to be resolved as soon as possible in order to meet project objectives and timelines. These concerns includes all partnerships including those among the researchers and stations but also partnerships at all levels of the value chain and with the researchers.

10) The redefinition of objectives and associated meetings and reports etc. need to be finalized as soon as possible and reduced in number in order to minimize transaction costs. Too much time is associated with such activities and is detracting from the project activities necessary to achieve the objectives of value chain improvement.

11) Early impacts and wins need to be highlighted. In some cases low hanging fruit in terms of herd health advice or genetic management do not appear to have been implemented. For example, efforts to reduce inbreeding and negative selection practices in the small ruminant value chain would produce early economic and genetic gains

12) Listening to concerns by the participants is crucial to understanding the issues raised. The management team needs to make clear and transparent responses to concerns that are such that participants appreciate that their voices have been heard.

13) Assessment of the usefulness of the Livestock-Fish emails and the Wiki may help the management team in responding to concerns participants in the CRP expressed at this meeting. We have put in place several communication support tools for the CRP. These are evolving and require some changes in the ways program participants share information and updates. We are monitoring the tools, developing guidelines, and organizing awareness and training when possible.

SPAC Issues: Several issues are of specific concern to SPAC members.

1) First and foremost is the much needed addition of new members to the committee. We believe that at least one person should represent the fish community and another to represent the value chain. After meeting with the management team we understand they will propose 3-4 names and allow the SPAC to review the nomination.

2) Dates for the next meeting have been discussed (December 11-12, 2013). These may work well if we allow for flexibility to have the SPAC to meet a few days earlier to fit the SPAC members' schedules.

3) Schedules at future meeting need to be set prior to attending and the duties discussed. This will avoid having to rebook tickets and will make the time more productive.

4) We have been asked to review IDOs and logframes and we understand management's desire to refine them further before sending them to SPAC. Our plan will be to review them by email and then meet by Skype to finalize the report. If it is your desire to have our comments in time for the September meeting please give us sufficient time as August is traditionally vacation time.

5) The SPAC was asked to consider whether the management team's response to our first report was acceptable. Responses to our reports should be timely and contain constructive responses as to how the issues raised will be addressed relative to the CRP. Our feeling was that the response to our report was somewhat defensive rather than entirely constructive.

6) It appears the CGIAR system has a large concern with governance issues. We agree they are important and we respect that ILRI and the program must be in alignment with these. However, we kindly ask that we not be overburdened by these, as they add to the transactions costs of the SPAC and will detract from our primary role related to the CRP.